



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES & PUBLIC PROTECTION
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

March 3, 2016

Sen. Timothy Larson, Co-Chair
Rep. Stephen Dargan, Co-Chair
Public Safety and Security Committee
Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

The Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection supports the following bills before you today and we thank you for raising these important agency proposals.

HB 5407-An Act Concerning the Division of State-Wide Emergency Telecommunications.

This bill codifies current practice and changes all references of "Office of State-wide Emergency Telecommunications" to "Division of Statewide Emergency Telecommunications."

When DESPP was established in 2011, the Office of State-Wide Emergency Telecommunications was housed within the Division of Fire Investigation and Statewide Emergency Telecommunications. Fire Investigation was reassigned to CSP in 2011 and no longer exists in that Division. The director of the unit responsible for the Division of Statewide Emergency Telecommunications, which now includes Communication Technical Services (CTS), reports directly to the Commissioner of DESPP.

The bill also updates the 9-1-1 statutes by adding Next-Generation 9-1-1 (NG911) language and requirements.

HB 5410—An Act Eliminating the Penalty for Refusing to Submit to the Taking of Fingerprints, a Photograph and a Physical Description.

This bill removes the \$100 penalty in CGS 29-17 for an arrestee's refusal to be fingerprinted as required under CGS 29-12.

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The Department believes that we must not give anyone who is arrested the right to refuse to be fingerprinted therefore, the current provision in statute to 'opt out' be eliminated.

The agency is seeing an increasing number of individuals refuse to have their fingerprints taken when arrested, instead opting to be fined \$100. This causes a number of issues that are outlined below.

The FBI only accepts fingerprint-supported arrests and convictions. Every National Criminal History Record (i.e., the RAP Sheet) includes a set of the arrestee's fingerprints. When an arrestee in CT refuses to submit to fingerprinting, the CT Criminal History Record (RAP Sheet) is incomplete. The incomplete record is then rejected by the FBI, thus there is no record of that arrest outside of CT. As a result, although CT law enforcement agencies have access to the CT record of an arrest, federal enforcement agencies and any other states do not.

Without a complete National Criminal History Record, no jurisdiction outside of CT can make an informed decision regarding the potential permit holder's suitability, thereby creating some opportunity for that person to obtain a pistol permit in another state. Further, an arrestee's refusal to be fingerprinted also affords them the ability to move about the country without signaling their potential risk to law enforcement authorities in those jurisdictions.

Lastly, without the submission of fingerprints, it prevents that subject's fingerprints from being searched against several fingerprint databases, including the unsolved latent database at the CT Forensic Laboratory, which houses yet-to-be identified fingerprints taken at crime scenes, precluding an opportunity to identify a person of interest in a crime or unsolved cold case.

Thank you for your consideration of these two important proposals.

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